Strange and Remarkable

Propheſies and Prodictions

of the Holy, Learned, and Excellent

JAMES USHER,

Late Lord Arch-Biſhop of Armagh, *and Lord Primate of* Ireland.

Giving an Account of his Fore-telling

I. The Rebellion in *Ireland* fourty years before it came to paſs.

II. The Confuſion and Miſeries of *England*, in *Church* and *State*.

III. The Death of King CHARLES the I.

IV. His own Poverty and want.

V. The Diviſions in *England* in matters of Religion.

Laſtly, Of a great and Terrible Perſecution which ſhall fall upon the Reformed Churches by the Papiſts, wherein the then Pope ſhould be chiefly concerned.

Written by the Perſon who heard it from this Excellent Perſons own Mouth, and now publiſhed, earneſtly to perſwade us to that Repentance and Reformation which can only prevent our Ruin and Deſtruction.

And the Lord ſaid, ſhall I hide from Abraham *that thing which I do?* Gen. 18 17.

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Strange and Remarkable PREDICTIONS, of that Truly Learned, and Excellent Bishop, JAMES USHER Late Lord Primate of Ireland.

THE Author of the Life of this Excellent and Worthy Primate and Arch Bishop, gives an account that among other extraordinary Gifts and Graces which it pleased the Almighty to bestow upon him, he was wonderfully endued with a Spirit of Prophesie, whereby he gave out several true Predictions and Prophecies of things a great while before they came to pass, whereof some we have seen fulfilled, and others remained yet to be accomplished. And though he was one that abhorred Enthusiastick Notions, being too Learned, Rational and Knowing, to admit of such idle freaks and Whimsies: Yet he profest, *That several times in his Life he had many things impressed upon his mind, concerning future events, with so much weightiness and importunity, that he was not able to keep them secret, but lay under an unavoidable necessity to make them known.*

From which spirit he foretold the *Irish* Rebellion Fourty years before it came to pass, with the very time when it should break forth, in a Sermon preached in *London* in 1601. where from *Ezek.* 4. 6 discoursing concerning the Prophets bearing the iniquity of *Israel* fourty days, the Lord therein appointed a day for a year: he made a direct Application in Relation to the connivance at Popery at that time, *from this year says he, I will visit the sin of Ireland, that these whom you now tolerate for the sake of Peace, and you shall bear his in-*

quity. Which prediction proved exactly true, for from that time 1601 to the year 1641 was just Fourty years, in which it is notoriously known, that the Rebellion and Destruction of *Ireland* happened, which was acted by those Popish Priests, and other Papists, which were then connived at, and of this Sermon the Bishop reserved the Notes, and put a Note thereof in the Margent of the Bible, and for twenty years before he still lived in the Expectation of the fulfilling thereof. And the neares the Time was, the more confident he was, that it was near Accomplishment, though there was no visible appearance of any such thing: And save Dr. *Bernard* the year before the Rebellion broke forth, the Bishop taking his leave of me being then going from *Ireland* to *England*, he advised me to a serious preparation; for I should see heavy Sorrows and miseries, before I saw him again, which he delivered with as great confidence as he had seen it with his eyes: Which seems to verifie that of the Prophet. *Amos* 3. 7. *Surely the Lord will do nothing, but he will reveal it to his Servants the Prophets*

From this Spirit of Prophesie, he fore saw the changes and miseries of *England* in Church and State; for having in one of his Books called *De Prim. Eccl. Brit.* given a large account of the destruction of the Church and State of the *Britains* by the *Saxons* about 550 years after Christ, he gives this among other reasons, why he insisted so largly upon it. That he forelaw, that a like Judgement was yet behind, if timely Repentance and Reformation did not prevent it: and he would often mourn upon the foresight of this, long before it came.

From this Spirit he gave mournful Intimations of the Death of our late Sovereign *Charles* the first, of whom he would be often speaking with fear and trembling, even when the King had the greatest hopes. And would therefore constantly pray and use all advice possible, to prevent any such thing.

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From this Spirit, he foresaw his own Poverty in Worldly things: and this he would often speak of, with admiration to the Hearers, when he was in his greatest Prosperity: which the event did most certainly verify.

From this Spirit he Predicted the Divisions and Contusions in *England* in Matters of Religion and the sad consequences thereof, some of which we have seen fulfilled: And I pray God the rest which he feared, may not also be accomplished upon us Lastly From this Spirit he foretold, that the greatest stroak upon the Reformed Churches was yet to come: and that the time of the utter Ruine of the See of *Rome*, should be when she thought her self most secure: And as to this last, I shall add a brief Account from the Persons own hand, who was concerned therein; which followeth in these words.

The Year before this Learned and Holy Primate A Bishop *Usher* dyed, I went to him and earnestly desired him to give me in Writing his Apprehension concerning Justification and Sanctification by Christ because I formerly heard him Preach upon these Points, wherein he seemed to make these great mysteries more intelligible to my mean capacity, than any thing which I had ever heard from any other But because I had but an imperfect and confused Remembrance of the Particulars, I took the boldness to importune him, that he would please to give me a brief account of them in writing; whereby I might the better imprint them in my memory; of which he would willingly have excused himself by declaring his intentions of not writeing any more; Adding That if he did write any thing, it should not exceed above a Sheet or two: But upon my continued Importunity, I at last obtained his Promise.

He coming to Town sometime after, was pleased to give me a Visit at my House; where I failed not to challenge the benefit of the Promise he had made

me: (he replyed) *That he had not write, and yet he could not charge himself with any breach of Promise: for* (said he) *I did begin to write, but when I came to write of Sanctification, that is of the new Creature, which God formeth by his Spirit in every Soul, which he doth truly Regenerate, I found so little of it wrought in my self, that I could speak of it only as Parots by Rote, and without the knowledge and understanding of what I might have expresst; and therefore, I durst not presume to proceed any further upon it.*

And when I seemed to stand amaz'd to hear such an humble Confession, from so great and experienced a Christian. He added, *I must tell you we do not well understand what Sanctification and the new Creature are; It is no less than for a man to be brought to an entire Resignation of his will to the will of God, and to live in the Offering up of his Soul continually in the flames of Love, as a whole burnt Offering to Christ, & how little* (says he) *are many of those who profess Christianity experimentally acquainted with this work on their Souls.*

By this Discourse, I conceived he had very excellently and clearly discovered to me that part of Sanctification which he was unwilling to write.

I then presumed to enquire of him what his present apprehensions were concerning a very great Persecution which should fall upon the Church of God in these Nations of *England*, *Scotland* and *Ireland*, of which this Reverend Primate had spoken with great confidence many years before, when we were in the highest and fullest state of outward Peace and Settlement, I asked him whether he did believe those sad times to be past, or that they were yet to come, to which he answered, *That they were yet to come: and that he did as confidently expect it, as ever he had done*; adding *that this sad Persecution would fall upon all the Protestant Churches in Europe.* I replyed, that I did hope it might have been past as to these

Nations

Nations of ours, since I thought, that though we who were the People thereof, have been punished much less then our sins have deserved; and that our late Wars had made far less devastations than War commonly brings upon those Countries where it pleaseth God in Judgement to suffer it: yet we must needs acknowledge, that many great Houses had been Burnt, Ruined, and left without Inhabitants, many great Families impoverished and undone, and many Thousand Lives also had been lost in that bloody war; and that *Ireland* and *Scotland* as well as *England* had drunk very deep of the Cup of Gods Anger even to the overthrow of the Government: and the utter desolation almost of a very great part of those Countries.

But this Holy Man, turning to me and fixing his Eyes upon me with that serious and fearful look which he usually had when he spake Gods word and not his own, and when the power of God seemed to be upon him, and to constrain him to speak, which I could easily discern much to differ from the countenance wherewith he usually spake to me: He said thus,

Fool not your self with such hopes, for I tell you: all you have yet seen hath been but the beginning of sorrows; what is yet to come upon the Protestants *Churches of Christ, who will ere long fall under a sharper Persecution then ever yet has been upon them: and therefore* (said he to me) *look you be not found in the Outward court, but a worshipper in the Temple before the Altar; for Christ will measure all those that profess his Name and call themselves his People, and the Outward worshippers he will leave out to be trodden down by the Gentiles. The Outward Court* (says he) *is the formal Christian whose Religion lyes in performing the outside duties of Christianity, without having an inward Life and Power of Faith and love uniting them to Christ, and these God will leave to be trodden down by*

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swept away by the Gentiles: But the worshippers within the Temple and before the Altar are those who indeed Worship God in Spirit and in truth, whose Soules are made his Temples, and is honoured and adored in the most inward thoughts of their hearts, and they Sacrifice their Lusts and vile affections, yea and their own wills to him, and these God will hide in the hollow of his Hand and under the shadow of his wings; and this shall be one great difference between this last, and other proceeding persecutions; For in the former, the most eminent and spiritual Ministers and Christians did generally suffer most and were most violently fallen upon; But in this last Persecution, these shall be preserved by God as a Seed to partake of that Glory which shall immediatly follow and come upon the Church as soon as ever this Storm shall be over; for as it shall be the sharpest, so it shall be the shortest Persecaution of them all; and shall only take away the gross Hypocrits and formal Professors but the true Spiritual Believers shall be preserved till the Calamity be over past.

I then asked him by what means or instruments this great Tryal should be brought on; He answered, by the Papists; I replyed, that it seemed to me very improbable that they should be able to do it, since they were now little countenanced and but few in these Nations, & and that the heart of the people were more set against them than ever since the Reformation: He answered again, that it would be by the hands of Papists and the way of a sudden Massacre, and that the Pope should be the chief instrument of it

All this he spake with so great Assurance and with the same serious and concerned Countenance, which I have before observed him to have when I have heard him foretell some things which in all humane appearance were very unlikely to come to pass, which yet I my self have lived to see happen according to his Prediction, and this made me give the more earnest attention to what he then uttered.

He then added, That the Papists were in his Opinion those Nations spoken of in the 11 verse of the Revelation, to whom the outward *Court should be left, that they might tread it under foot; They having received the Gentiles worship in their adoring images & Saints departed*

and in taking to themselves many Mediatours and this (said he) the Papists are now designing among themselves, and therefore be sure you be ready.

This was the Substance and I think for the greatest part, the very same words which this Holy man spake to me at the time beforementioned not long before his death and which I write down, that so great and notable a Warning might not be lost and forgotten by myself & others.

This gracious Man repeated the same things in substance to his only Daughter the Lady Tyrril and that with many tears and much about the same time that he had expresst what is aforesaid to me, and which the Lady Tyrril assured me of with her own mouth to this purpose.

That opening the Door of his Chamber she found him with his Eyes lift up to Heaven and the tears running apace down his Cheeks and that he seemed to be in an Extasie wherein he continued for half an hour not taking the least notice of her though she came into the Room but at last turning to her he told her That his thoughts had been taken up about the miseries and Persecutions that were coming upon the Churches of Christ which would be so sharp and bitter that the contemplation of them had fetched those Tears from his Eyes and that he hoped he should not live to see it but possibly she might for it was even at the doors, *Therefore take heed* (says he) *that you be not found sleeping.*

The same things he also Repeated to the Lady Bysse Wife to the present Lord Chief Baron of *Ireland*, but with adding this circumstance, That if they brought back the King, it might be delayed a little longer, (but said he) it will surely come, therefore be sure to look that ye be not found unprepared for it.

To conclude in the words of Dr. *Bernard*, speaking of this excellent Person, Now howsoever I am as far from heeding of Prophesies this way as any, yet with me it is not Improbable, that so great a Prophet, so Sanctified from his Youth, so knowing and eminent through the Universal Church, might have at some special time more than ordinary Motions and Impulses in doing the Watch mans part, of giving warning of Judgements approaching.

FINIS.